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Nigerian Foreign Policy: a Fourth Republic Diplomatic Escapade

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Foreign policy is unpredictable and has no specific domestic or international boundary. The scope is not static; issues in foreign policy are continuous. Therefore, no government consciously design her foreign policy outlook, the focus of any foreign policy would depend heavily on events in and around the nation and Nigeria is not an exception. The concept of Africa as the centre-piece of Nigerian's foreign policy has emerged as the most consistent theme that runs through her foreign policies in all the various regimes. Foreign policy of Nigeria could be called a three concentric circle, this concentric circle clearly puts Nigeria's interest first, West African Sub-region second and then the rest of Africa. It is very crucial to note that between 1960 and 1990, eighteen civil wars in Africa resulted in about 7 million deaths and spawned 5 million refugees. Nigeria cannot ignore Africa's problems rather she must maintain the principle of Afrocentrism. This is so because; one out of every five Africans is a Nigerian. This paper therefore seeks to critically analyze the core issues in Nigerian foreign policy and challenges facing Nigerian foreign policy in the fourth republic, some recommendations will also be suggested.

Keywords: Foreign Policy, Diplomacy, United Nation, Africa and Nigeria.

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Introduction

The historical antecedent of Nigeria's foreign policy owes much to the vision of Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. Nigeria's first Prime Minister and Head of Government from October 1960 to January 1966, and can be located in his famous speeches during the pre and post- independent periods. The objective of Nigeria Foreign Policy are enshrined in Chapter

two, section 19 of the 1999 constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria under the rubric of fundamental objectives and directive principle of state policy.

Although a critical look at the Speeches shows the paramount importance that the government placed on the continental and global issues, it cannot be doubted that an overwhelming and significant emphasis was placed on African

issues and problems. Thus, during his UN acceptance speech, Balewa stated that;

‘So far I have concentrated on the problems of Africa. Please do not think that we are not interested in the problems of the rest of the world; we are intensely interested in them and hope to be allowed to assist in finding solutions to them through this organization, but being human we are naturally concerned first with what affects our immediate neighbourhood (Ajaebili and Oyewole, 2011; 277).

It is important to note that every foreign policy is the reflection of the personal idiosyncrasies and aspirations of the leadership of the country. Nigeria’s foreign policy during the first Republic was conservative and pro- British. The conservative posture of Nigeria’s foreign policy in the Balewa years was evident in his words

“We are grateful to the British officers whom we have known first as masters, and then as leaders, and finally as partners, but always as friends (Ajaebili and Oyewole, 2011; 277).

Issues in nigerian foreign policy in the fourth republic

Since the beginning of the present democratic dispensation also known as the fourth Republic there has been call for changes in the objectives and principles of Nigeria foreign policy as it was postulated by Alhaji (Dr) Sule Lamido, Foreign Minister Of The Federal Republic Of Nigeria, 1999-2003 that;

At the very onset therefore, one of the key priorities of the administration was to repair the damage that military rule had done to Nigeria’s

relations with other states and with international platforms such as the Commonwealth, the African Union, et cetera. We needed to restore the image of the country as one where human rights were respected, rule of law is the basis of governance and administration was geared towards the improvement of the living conditions of the ordinary citizen. In short, we needed to, while creating a positive image for the country internationally, be able to leverage this new positive image towards rebuilding the confidence of the people in governance through delivering practical benefits to them.

Some of the issues that have dominated Nigerian foreign policy since 1999 are;

- Citizen diplomacy
- Economic diplomacy/ interest
- Nigeria role as regional hegemony/ Peace-building and Peace-keeping in Africa
- The call for UN reform.

Citizen Diplomacy

Although diplomacy has been variously defined, however, no definition can be regarded as commanding general acceptability. A charming characterization, though attacked to be vague and inadequate, is given by Ernest Satow (1966:1), who defines diplomacy as “the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of official relations between the governments of independent states”. This definition was criticized for obvious reasons – not all diplomats are either intelligent or tactful, yet they all take part in diplomacy (Ogunsanwo, 2007:1). Geoffrey McDermott (1973:37) sees diplomacy as “a science which permits its practitioners to say nothing and shelter behind mysterious nods of the head..., a science who’s most successful exponent is he who can swim with his head above streams of events he pretends to conduct”. Morgenthau, one of the leading exponents of realism (1978: 529), described diplomacy as

“the technique for accommodating conflicts of interest, and the promotion of national interest by peaceful means.”

However, a more comprehensive definition which underscores its essence and *raison d'être* is that:

Diplomacy is the political process whereby states establish and nurture official interrelations, direct and indirect, to pursue their respective goals, interest and substantive and procedural policies in the international environment (Plischke, 1977:41).

Though the concept ‘citizen diplomacy’ appears self-explanatory, it is not exactly so, more so, in the context of diplomacy as a political concept depicting the involvement of average citizens engaging representatives of another country or cause either inadvertently or by design (Agbu, 2007:9). Ozoemenam Mbachu (2007:9) sees Citizen Diplomacy as an organized action that government takes to achieve the objectives that have been set by policy makers. And that the concept, as currently being employed denotes re-orientation of Nigeria’s foreign policy pursuit towards beneficial economic and political engagement so as to meet up with the United Nation’s Millennium Development Goals for Africa. According to him, this arose from the realization that the progress, prosperity and survival of the nation must be the concern of every Nigerian at home and in the Diaspora. According to Okocha and Nzeshi (2007:3), citizen diplomacy is geared towards “protecting” the image and integrity of Nigeria and retaliates against countries who are hostile and who brand Nigeria as corrupt (Okocha and Nzeshi, 2007). Giving reasons for the adoption of the policy, the progenitor (Cited in Adejumo, 2007) explains further:

Our foreign policy has come of age and the age of innocence is over. We remain proud of our track record from Tafawa Balewa up till now. The country that is the largest black nation in the world could not have done otherwise. A world where every sixth black man is a Nigerian could not have done otherwise, or where every four Africans is a Nigerian could not have done otherwise. We should ask ourselves some hard questions: to what extents has our foreign policy benefited Nigerians? To what extent has our foreign policy put food on our tables? In order words where is the citizen in our foreign policy?

He opined that Nigeria carried enormous burden to be the symbol of the success of the black nation and there could never be a black story, “unless it is a Nigerian success story”. Explained differently, citizen Diplomacy “is to ensure that our foreign policy becomes the most powerful way to express who we are...” And that we are not changing the fundamentals of our foreign policy but we are changing the branding.

Bola Akinterinwa (2007: 23) explains further that as conceptualized, individual Nigerians are to be the main focus of any foreign policy endeavor, they are to be made important stakeholders and first beneficiaries of Nigeria foreign policy efforts in any of Nigeria’s foreign policy concentric circles. More important, they are to be specially empowered to respond to the changing challenges of globalization wherever they may be found.

He pointed out challenges before Nigerian government in ‘practicalising’ this new foreign approach to include, prevention of Nigerians seeking visas in accredited diplomatic missions from indecent treatment; how to ensure that Nigerian is respected at home and abroad; and most importantly, how to make Nigerian business entrepreneurs take advantage of Nigeria’s

regional and sub-regional peace-making and peace-building efforts. Ogunsanwo (2007: 3) argues that, citizen diplomacy could mean that, from now on the Nigerian citizen abroad is the centre of Nigeria's national interest and therefore the country's entire diplomatic machinery should be geared towards protecting his or her interest – economic welfare etc. He further pointed out that, any diplomacy that does not take this into consideration will not be appropriate for our diplomatic missions abroad.

As succinctly pointed out by Osita Eze (2007: 8), Citizenship Diplomacy articulates, what is or should be implicit as the major goal of our foreign policy. Being people – oriented, it is a step in further stating that both national and international actions will be driven primarily by the need to promote the welfare and security of citizens.

From 2007 to date, citizen diplomacy seems not to have yielded the envisaged dividend due to some factors that are both domestic and international. Placing the citizen at the centre of the national programme reinforces the original purpose of the government and when those in power provide necessary leadership, they will without much effort secure the trust of the general populace and create centres of national solidarity and more agents for national progress. In Nigeria, we don't seem to get this. Our Governments do not value our lives. Nigerians were been attacked in South- Africa, another one was brutalized in Asia, routinely, our people are beheaded in Saudi Arabia. At home and in Diaspora, Nigerians are left to their own survival tactics; many have learnt not to expect anything from their government (Abati 2009).

In the views of Mahmood (2009:24), with the President lacking international exposure and most of the Ministers in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also lacking any broad experience in diplomacy, there is no wonder that, in foreign policy, this

government has not made any appreciable impact. Nigeria's svoice is not heard in major international fora; Nigeria has initiated nothing spectacular in the last two years at the dynamic global arena and, apart from bilateral agreements which are hardly followed up, Nigeria has gained nothing from diplomatic activities under this administration. This is not what is expected of the anchor nation of the Black world. In the immediate sub – region of ECOWAS whose institutions Nigeria is hosting and substantially funding, Nigerians are not even employed as drivers.

In the ECOWAS Community Court of Justice only 7percent of the staff are Nigerians, and it is situated here in Abuja. At the African Union since 2003 when Obasanjo fielded two female candidates from Nigeria for the same post, making the country look unserious, no Nigerian has been elected in the AU Commission for the last six years. A nation that has the largest population in Africa is not represented in the African Union Commission. Burkina Faso defeated Nigeria in 2007. Really, what manner of citizen diplomacy is it when the citizens lack representation? Another case in point which undermined Nigerian citizen diplomacy is the matter that involved Dr. Ngozi Ugo, Mahmood (2009) narrated that, she is a citizen of Nigeria who had done so much for the UN for so many years especially in the area of human rights, international law, conflict transformation and peace-building etc. and was able to win a host of international awards. The UN found her worthy of being nominated for the position of Assistant Secretary- General of the UN on three different occasions including under the present government of Barak Obama.

From 2007 to date, she has been nominated for the position of UN Ombudsman, deputy special representative of the secretary-general etc, all equivalent to the position of assistant -, a position that required the endorsement of her home government Nigeria. But between the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs and the utterly discredited office of the Attorney-General of the

Federation, they kept dribbling her until she lost. What manner of citizen diplomacy is it when on merit a citizen is found worthy of holding a very important position by the whole world but her country refused to endorse her? As Mahmood precisely observed:

Dr. Ugo's presence in the UN System would have enhanced Nigeria's position for the UN permanent seat. Other more serious countries campaign for their citizens and that is why the highest ranking African in the UN system is a Tanzanian woman. Go to the Commonwealth Secretariat in London you may think you are in India's Ministry of Foreign Affairs because of the number of Indians there. And this is where our own Chief Anyaoku served for almost four decades. When is Nigeria going to stand and recognize its own? It is sad, unfortunate and indeed painful (Mahmood, 2009).

Another area of assessing citizen diplomacy is to proffer answers to pertinent questions raised by Adejumo (2007). He asked, "How helpful have been Nigeria foreign missions all over the world towards Nigerians living abroad, for instance"? Infact, coming to think of it, in generality, how helpful have Nigeria governments been to even Nigerians living in Nigeria, not to talk of the ones abroad? In his thought-provoking answers, he said: There are too many instances of neglect to be mentioned, but it is all the same sad stories. Nigerian diplomats have never taken care of either our image or the Nigerians living abroad.

Economic Diplomacy/Interest

It is almost a truism that only a sound economic base can guarantee a credible foreign policy for the country. There is also a positive

correlation between a strong economic base, political stability and National Security (Nurudeen, 2010:556). At this point, it is imperative to make some clarifications of the concept of economic diplomacy. This brand of diplomacy involves the decision-making, policy-making, and advocating of the sending state's business interests, and requires the application of technical expertise that analyze the effects of a country's (receiving state) economic situation on its political climate and on the sending state's economic interests. The scope of economic diplomacy comprises international and domestic economic issues including the "rules for economic relations between states". Due to increased globalization and the resultant interdependence among states, economic diplomacy has gone deeper into domestic decision making to cover policies relating to production, exchange of goods, services and instruments (official development assistance).

Thus, economic diplomacy encourages and promotes investment, protects deals from inception to signing of contracts and in fact markets an entire nation as if it is a business outfit itself. The diplomats would conduct trade events and seminars, attend trade shows, visit potential investors and be proactive in marketing the attributes of their country. Success in this endeavour requires knowledge of the business process, of the home country's economy, and of salesmanship. Nigeria's foreign policy has been geared towards improving the well being of Nigerians. This is essential for protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Nigerian state. It was in 1987 that the Babangida administration used economic diplomacy as a major policy thrust of that regime. This novel idea was propagated by Major General Ike Nwachukwu, then, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The thrust of this policy was to make Nigeria's foreign policy serve the purpose of economic development at home given that the

regime inherited a prostrate economy from its predecessors (Fawole, 2003: 39). Seeking and securing the goodwill and support of friendly nations that have had a long history of good relations with Nigeria will help achieve a thriving economic diplomacy. But it is of paramount importance to improve the weak infrastructure back home, as a country with poor infrastructural facilities cannot command the respect of other nations in the international system. The current approach by President Goodluck E. Jonathan of appointing career diplomats as ambassadors to Nigeria's foreign missions is a welcome development. Our foreign missions should therefore use their expertise to achieve Nigeria's intention of realizing its domestic policy of economic diplomacy.

The missions should be well funded to achieve better leadership and results. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs should monitor and assess the work of each mission to ensure that our policy of economic diplomacy is thoroughly understood and implemented to the letter. The Nigerians in Diaspora Organization (NIDO), through its efforts and contributions, can serve as a dependable ally in the realization of this objective. Evidence abound that crime and corruption are the banes of Nigeria's development. The current *Boko Haram* insurgency in the northeastern portion of the country speaks volumes. These social malaises, no doubt, have bartered the country's image. Many foreign companies have had to withdraw their operations from Nigeria because of crime, corruption and insecurity. For those that managed to stay, doing business in the country has become very expensive.

Therefore, there is urgent need for a holistic effort by the government, corporate bodies and individuals to stamp out the evils of insecurity, crime and corruption so that the country is relatively safe for both Nigerians and foreigners to feel at home. The benefits of economic

diplomacy if effectively pursued cannot be overestimated. A robust and viable economy would mean a reduction in crime by Nigerians as many will be gainfully engaged in legitimate endeavours. It would also deal a severe blow to the current brain-drain which has sapped and continues to sap the unquantifiable manpower of the country. In addition to improving the living conditions and standard of the citizenry, a better-managed economy would ensure that Nigeria's respectability and clout on the global stage are regained (Ogunbayo, 2011:29).

Nigeria Role as Regional Hegemony; Peace-Keeping and Peace-Building in Africa

Nigeria's commitment to global peace, security and stability has been conducted at enormous costs, both in human and material terms, which even major powers have often found prohibitive and politically toxic (Uhomobhi 2012:124). Also African countries with Nigeria at the fore-front have realized that they should rise together and fight the menace of conflict and frequent internal crisis which has turned to a cankerworm that has eaten deeply into the continent, it is high time Africa stopped relying on the so called super powers as Francis Deng stated, Africans are recognizing that the world does not care much about them and that they must take their destinies into their own hands.

Nigeria has participated in almost all UN, regional and sub-regional peace-keeping and peace-building operations since she became independent in 1960. The Congo crisis was Nigeria's first outing ever since the country has been a major contributor of troops for peace-keeping and peace-building operations (Dokubo, 2005:252). We shall concentrate on the Nigeria peace-keeping and peace-building operations in Africa since 1999; the Darfur, Cote d ivoire and Mali crises.

Nigeria's Peace-Keeping in Darfur

Though Nigeria had demonstrated her peacekeeping role in the 1970s and 1980s through the UN and OAU, the decade of the 1990s has witnessed a significant expansion in the circumference of Nigeria's participation in peacekeeping operations. In that way, Nigeria has contributed immensely to the Sudanese peace process particularly through the platform of international organizations; the country has sought to give practical expression to its objective of foreign policy dealing with the maintenance of international peace. Thus, since 1960 when Nigeria achieved independent statehood, she has sought to pursue certain foreign policy objectives within the context of its overall national interest (Ministry of External Affairs, 1991: 29).

However, Nigeria's involvement in the Sudanese peace process stems from her belief that socio-economic development and integration in Africa can only be attained under an atmosphere of peace and stability. Put simply, Nigeria's record as a vanguard of peace, within and outside the continent, speaks for itself (Saliu 2000:30, Saliu 1999:29-31). No doubt, the contribution of Nigeria towards lasting sustainable peace in Sudan cannot be overemphasized. Put simply, Nigeria was among the first countries to send troops to the troubled Western Region of Sudan. She has the largest troop contingent support to the then African Union mission in Sudan-AMIS (HRW, 2006:52).

In furtherance of its efforts to broker a political settlement, the former Nigeria's president Olusegun Obasanjo, a long time collaborator in the Sudanese peace process has vigorously pursued the realization of lasting peace in Sudan. The president attempted to convene in 2001 a Southern Sudan political force conference in Abuja aimed at helping Southern Sudanese leaders reach a local consensus on future peace

negotiations. A possible national conference was envisioned as the immediate step after the Southern conference. Although, these planned conference fail to materialize the attempts offered the most promising peace initiative for some years (ICG, 2002:196). Simply put, Nigeria continues her support for the IGAD process until it delivered the peace agreement of January 9, 2005.

More importantly, Obasanjo acting in his capacity as African Union chairperson then, appointed former Nigerian Head of State, General Abdul-Salam Abubakar as his special envoy to Chad and Sudan on the Darfur conflict. The special envoy visited Darfur for assessment of the humanitarian crisis and the report of the visit, was a major catalyst that spurred the AU to intensify efforts for peaceful negotiation. This gesture encourages dialogue between rebel groups and the central government in Abuja in August 2004 for peace talks. This led to the signing of Abuja peace agreement and consequently leads to Darfur peace agreement.

Nigeria spent over 82 million dollars and deployed over 4000 troops to the peacekeeping mission in Darfur and scores of Nigerian soldiers lost their lives. In 2007, for instance, seven Nigerian soldiers were ambushed and killed in Darfur region of Sudan. Also, president Jonathan had in 2010, at the wake of the loss of seven Nigerian soldiers in Darfur, threatened to withdraw Nigeria's troops taking part in the UN peacekeeping missions worldwide, saying that it was unacceptable for the soldiers to be killed while on an international mission abroad. In October 2012 about four of Nigerian soldiers attached with UN African Union Mission (UNAMID) were similarly killed in Sudan western Darfur region but despite all these the Nigerian soldiers remained in Darfur since 2004 despite the threat to the domestic peace and security at home by the activities of terrorists groups like movement

for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MENDS), Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF), the Jamaatu Ahlissunnah Liddaawati wal Jihad (or Boko Haram) and the Jamaatu Ansarul Muslimina fi Biladis –Sudan (JAMBS) within that period till and even after the bifurcation of the country in 2011 which gave birth to the South Sudan as an independent country. This therefore shows that Nigeria devoted enormous time, human and material resources to the Sudanese peace process.

Nigeria in Mali

Sequel to the request of ECOWAS to suppress the Tuareg rebellion by the interim government of Mali in September, 2012 ECOWAS unanimously agreed at its 11 November 2012 meeting in Abuja on an intervention force of 3,300 to retake northern Mali from rebel groups. ECOWAS position was forwarded to African Union for the endorsement of its military intervention in Mali. African Union Led Mission Support in Mali (AFISMA) was later presented to the UNSC as mandated by Resolution No. 2071 which in turn authorized the deployment of AFISMA to Mali for an initial period of one year under Resolution No. 2085.

Nigeria, the most populous country in West African sub-region once again played it hegemonic role in maintaining peace and security within the sub-region by contributing 1,200 troops to the African Union Led Support Mission in Mali. Nigeria's global acknowledged role in peacekeeping operation better positioned it to play a major role in restoring peace, security and order to Mali under AFISMA. ECOWAS proposal of 3,300 troops received a boost from the major financier (Nigeria) with the 1,200 troops joining its fray with a view to protecting its interest, ECOWAS interest and by extension African interests in the crisis ridden country. Nigeria, the second highest troop contributing country for the

United Nations peacekeeping missions worldwide did not renege in showing its capacity and capability in restoring peace, security and order to Mali by doling out troops (900 combat soldiers and 300 Air Force Personnel) supported with fund to the tune of \$34m (N7 billion) as well as undertaken the reconstruction and refurbishment of a number of clinics in some Malian military barracks as part of the Security Sector Reform (SSR) intervention to the tune of \$5.5m.

At the sideline of the inaugural meeting of presidential Eminent Persons Group in Agriculture in Geneva on the 22nd of January 2013, President Goodluck Jonathan emphasized that Nigeria's involvement in the crisis in Mali was not borne out of any territorial ambition but to secure her citizens from terrorism and stop terrorists from establishing bases in West Africa. The president noted that if Malian crisis is not well managed, it may engulf Nigeria and many of its neighbouring countries, pointing out that northern Mali is now becoming a sanctuary for breeding terrorism that are trooping into West Africa and northern Africa. The president is of the belief that almost 50% of Boko Haram adherents (terrorist group in northern Nigeria) are trained in northern Mali.

In the words of the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Olugbenga Ashiru "Nigeria must take the leadership role in this campaign which is very unique because, unlike previous ones in ECOWAS in Liberia and Sierra Leone where we were trying to enthrone democracy, rule of law and orderliness in those countries, this one that involves Mali, Nigeria should not be pledging the same number of troops when we know that in the ECOWAS Nigeria has the largest forces and her contribution of 1,200 troops justifies the country's strength and size. Also we are in command of AFISMA, so we must have troops to back up the command position. Mali is vast, so there must be enough troops on ground

for effective operation and to achieve the desired objective”

The Nigerian troops under AFISMA closely worked with 4,000 French troops to stem the advance of Al-Qaeda linked militants who had seized northern Mali and threatened to gain control over the capital Bamako. The joint operation succeeded in returning the insurgents into their hide out in various parts of the northern Mali with a new breath of peace in the country. The United States has earlier suggested that troops deployed from the Economic Community of West African State (ECOWAS) to Mali are not completely incapable and are not up to the task of fighting the rebels but the restoration of relative peace cannot be a success of an independent troop.

In fact, critics from different quarters questioned Nigeria’s engagement in military intervention in Mali because of the unresolved boiling Boko Haram crisis threatening the peace and security of the country. Thus, one must not forget Nigeria’s Foreign Policy objective with regard to Africa as its centrepiece and being the strong voice in the ECOWAS sub-region (military strength, economic muscle and experience in peacekeeping operations around the world), Nigeria could not afford to play dominant role when it is expected to be seen active. Also of note is the threat of growing ideological and tactical nexus between Mali’s Islamist groups and two Nigerian Jihadist affiliates – the Jamaatu Ahlissunnah Liddaawati wal Jihad (or Boko Haram) and the Jamaatu Ansarul Muslimina fi Biladis – Sudan (JAMBS). Nigeria’s intervention therefore serves its strategic interest in preventing northern Mali from providing safe havens for Islamists that threaten its existence as a secular state.

The return of peace thus, set the atmosphere for the conduct of the parliamentary election which ought to have been held since 2012 to

hold on the 28th of July, 2013 and 11th of August, 2013, first and second rounds respectively in which Ibrahim Boubacar Keitas Rally for Mali (RPM) won 115 of the 147 seat in the National Assembly while the Union for the Republic and Democracy (URD) led by Soumalia Cisse won between 17 and 19 seats, forming the opposition. Nigeria withdrew its troops for the first time in all its engagements in Military intervention in Mali in July 2013. There is a school of thought which believes that Nigeria withdrew its troops because of the growing Boko Haram crisis in the country with a view to strengthening the security networks across the country while some believe that Nigeria withdrew its troops in protest against the appointment of a Rwandan General to lead the UN peacekeeping mission instead of a Nigerian officer.

Nigeria and the UN Reform

The UN occupies a dominant place in the conduct of Nigeria’s diplomacy. The motive being that, the first and foremost organization which an independent Nigeria joined was the United Nations Organization. UN being a theatre for real politicking and this has engendered a heavy frustration on the side of Nigeria’s membership has unbearable consequences on state’s vital objectives. Many developing countries especially the weaker ones, continue to be marginalized in vital global affairs. The affairs of the UN have been conducted mostly by the dominant powers of the world.

It is on this basis, the former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, following the UN Millennium Declaration of 2000, set up the “High-Level Panel on Threat, Challenges and Change” to offer informed opinion on the reform agenda of the organization (Berdal, 2005:39). Security Council reform is the most fundamental and difficult of all UN reform issues. Nothing goes to the heart of the UN capabilities, its

international role, and its meaning as part of the international system (Zedillo 2005:6). The history of reform efforts geared toward making the Security Council more reflective of growing UN membership and of changing world politics since the organization's establishment conveys the slim prospects for meaningful change (Weiss, 2003:148).

In view of Nigeria, the restructuring of the Security Council that is more critical and fundamental like many other UN membership, Nigeria draws the attention to the fact that expansion of membership as well as a more equitable and regionally balanced representation on the council is bound to improve the democratic profile, legitimacy standing of the council which has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security. As Akindele (2005:30) in Nigeria Daily Times pointed out;

The membership of the Security Council indeed posed the biggest paradox of our time. Namely that those who are weeping louder than the bereaved, calling for democracy in other countries, cannot see the need to democratized the UN to ensure that all the free nations of the world conduct their affairs in an atmosphere devoid of bullying and condescending inequality.

Nigeria has since sent out signals indicating its wish to occupy one of the two seats proposed for the continent of Africa. The quest of Nigeria for a permanent seat in an enlarged UNSC cannot ignore the nation's rich experience in global, high tension political arena decision-making where it had served with notable achievement as a non-permanent member on five occasions. In 1967, it was during Nigeria's presidency of the Security Council that the historical resolution 242 on the Middle East problem was passed. Nigeria was also a non-permanent member of the council

during the consideration and adoption of the epoch-making Resolution 345 on Namibia's independence. Lastly it was also during Nigeria presidency that a resolution to determine the desirability or otherwise of the Palestine statehood was considered (Akindele, 2005:31). Nigeria is currently the president of UNSC for the month of April 2014.

Challenges facing Nigerian foreign policy

Nigerian foreign policy in the fourth republic no doubt has a lot achievements but it has also been plagued with some shortcomings. The first challenge facing Nigerian's foreign policy in the fourth republic is how to redeem the country's image that has been bastardized by the previous military regimes especially the Sani Abacha era when Nigeria was seen as international outcast as a result of the head of state and his foreign affairs minister's policy methods which is referred to as call "area boys diplomacy".

In its effort to return Nigeria to the path of global reckoning Obasanjo's administration opted for "political diplomacy". According to Babalola, in this regard the president was reported to have undertaken a total of 113 trips within 1999 to 2003 (cited in Omotola & Saliu, 2005:246). The quest to regain this image still continues and that is why one of the foreign policy objective prescribed in the vision 20:2020 is the articulation of better image for Nigeria internationally by 2020.

The problem posed by the conservative concentric circle nature of Nigerian as a result of what Tafawa Balewa referred to as Africa centrepiece of Nigerian foreign policy, this has made the immediate neighbours first problem Nigeria is facing. For instance the Ezulwini (Swaziland) consensus could be seen as a clog in the wheel of Nigeria to act independently of the AU in her bid to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

These neighbouring countries which Nigeria has helped generously through her African policy are her first enemies, the case in 2009 during the election of Nigeria as a non-permanent member of the UN security council for two years where Liberia, Sierra Leone and Togo voted for themselves even though they were neither candidates nor listed for election contest is a case in mind (Akinterinwa, 2012:22).

A cursory look at the Nigerian foreign policy under different regimes since the inception of the fourth republic has clearly shown that there is non procedural formulation and implementation of foreign policy because the leaders do take some decisions without consulting the appropriate institutions or foreign policy personnel. According to Fawole (2003:18):

Professor Gambari did not enjoy considerable latitude on the job. He was sidelined in the major decisions and was often left to do the necessary damage control after government had taken and implemented bad decisions. The ministry of Foreign Affairs was a mere on-looker in the decisions to close the nation's borders against its neighbours, expel illegal aliens in 1995 and engage the united Kingdom in a game of diplomatic tit-for-tat over the attempted abduction of Umaru Dikko from London.. The Iron will of General Buhari prevailed on all issues and thus denied the country's foreign policy the expertise and finesses that a scholar like Gambani could have brought into it.

This properly captures not only the modus operandi of Nigeria during the military era but also what obtains in the character all the fourth republic regimes when it comes to crucial foreign policies, also, the general public or what Sule Lamido called people on the street

are not being carried along in taking most foreign policy decisions and this has brought a disconnect or created a wide gap between the public and foreign policy making process. The general public has now developed what can properly be referred to as "policy apathy" towards most of the foreign policy decisions of Nigeria and that was why ordinary Nigerians were not jubilant about the debt relief granted to Nigeria in 2005 and many of them have open hostility for Nigeria's bid for a permanent seat in the United Nations security council (UNSC) (Uhomobhi, 2012:1a).

Another crucial challenge facing Nigerian foreign policy in the fourth republic is the issue of funding, the amount always budgeted for our the ministry of foreign affairs is relatively small in comparison with our gigantic and encompassing objectives to be achieved. For example, in 2009, when Nigeria spent US\$306million, South Africa spent US\$702million. In 2010, Nigeria budgeted US\$232million compared to South Africa's US\$634million. In 2012 also, Nigeria budgeted US\$317million and South Africa budgeted US\$702million (Uhomobhi, 2012:202b). The aforementioned figures has two implications for Nigeria, the first is that the foreign policy objectives will not be achieved satisfactorily as a result of paucity of funds and secondly, South Africa, Nigerian long time rival in the quest to dominate Africa will have her tentacles spread more than Nigeria.

Recommendation and conclusion

The recommendations that are going to be made in this study will be in line with what the study has been able to deduce as the major challenges facing Nigerian foreign policy. They are as follows: Nigeria needs to do is to tackle the problems facing her domestically ranging from insecurity pose by the members of the

Boko Haram with frequent bombings, killing and kidnapping of school children especially in the north east, official corruption in the public sector in form of what some scholars describe as prebendalism or patrimonialism, high level of illiteracy and poverty, all these menace have attracted international condemnation of the self-acclaimed Giant of Africa and that is a major setback to her foreign policy objectives, to achieve the foreign policy highlighted in the vision 20:2020 all the aforementioned evils have to be eradicated or minimally reduced.

The incumbent administration and the subsequent regimes also need to follow due process or the adequate procedure in formulating and implementing foreign policies by making sure that the appropriate institutions and personnel i.e ministry of foreign affairs, Nigerian embassies, Nigerian representatives at the various international organizations like UN, AU, ECOWAS, OPEC, COMMONWEALTH e.t.c are taking along in any decision that will

be taken, not only that, the ordinary man on the street has to be considered too and be allowed to air his views about the policy through public opinion.

It is also high time Nigeria stopped budgeting meagre amount of money for the ministry of foreign affairs and Nigerian embassies abroad because the international system is an arena of power politics which is characterised by the survival of the fittest, for Nigeria to survive she has to allocate more money to our foreign affairs personnel and institutions so that the country's foreign objectives could be achieved as soon as possible.

Our afrocentric policy must be based on cogent and coherent strategic objectives. Africa is the second largest continent in the world and the one with the highest diversity of states but Nigeria has not been utilizing its manifest destiny to lead the continent effectively and to use such leadership to achieve her national interests and continental aspirations.

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Внешняя политика Нигерии: дипломатическая эскапада Четвертой республики

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Внешняя политика бывает непредсказуемой, а кроме того, она не имеет определенных внутренних или международных границ. Ее область действия не статична; проблемы внешней политики постоянно изменяются. Следовательно, ни одно правительство не формирует свой взгляд на внешнюю политику сознательно; характер любой внешней политики во многом зависит от событий, происходящих внутри страны и в ее окружении, и Нигерия не является исключением. Видение Африки как определяющий фактор внешней политики Нигерии стало постоянным мотивом, влияющим на внешнюю политику страны в период любого из режимов. Внешнюю политику Нигерии можно представить как три концентрических круга, где внутренний круг символизирует, очевидно, личные интересы Нигерии, средний – интересы Западного субрегиона, а внешний – интересы всей оставшейся части Африки. Особенно важно отметить, что в период с 1960 по 1990 г. восемнадцать гражданских войн, прошедших в Африке, унесли жизни около 7 миллионов человек и заставили 5 миллионов человек стать беженцами. Нигерия не может игнорировать проблемы Африки: она вынуждена придерживаться принципа афроцентризма, так как каждый пятый африканец – это нигериец. Таким образом, данное исследование является попыткой критического анализа коренных проблем внешней политики Нигерии и трудностей, ожидающих страну в период Четвертой республики с предложением их решения.

Ключевые слова: внешняя политика, дипломатия, Организация Объединенных Наций, Африка и Нигерия.

Научная специальность: 23.00.00 – политология.
